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of air towards the raining cloud above, and another from it beneath at the surface of the globe; which latter is often observed by mariners, in those squalls which accompany detached showers falling in their vicinity.

The great effect which the abstraction of the electric fire from the air is now proved to have in causing rain to descend, makes the opinion of some philosophers more probable, that means will be yet discovered for producing this precipitation artificially; which considered impartially is not a greater exertion of human intellect, than the securing buildings from the stroke of lightning, by conductors. If ever this discovery takes place in a form sufficiently cheap and practicable for use, it may produce the greatest and most beneficial effects for the benefit of mankind in various parts of the earth, covering with plenty those arid regions which are now useless from incessant drought; and, what perhaps is of more consequence, diminishing the sum of human misery caused by temporary droughts in those countries where rain is usual.

It is probable that large electrical kites, with air balloons attached to them, to make them ascend higher, would have some effect in this way, especially when sent up from the tops of lofty hills. That the importance of the benefit in view would render the experiment worth trial, cannot be denied: it would at least be a more rational application of the balloon than what has of late years been made of it; as in general it has only been applied to gratify the curiosity of some individuals, as to the sensation the ascent would cause; which seems not to have been very agreeable, as they have been on most occasions in as great a hurry to descend to the ground from the higher regions, as they have been eager at first to rise to them.

Account of the Use of the Oxymuriatic Gas in the Fumigating Army Hospitals. In a letter from M. Chameron to M. Guyton.

Annales de Chemie, tom. 64. p. 172.

Posen, Aug. 18, 1807.

M. Desgeneltes, the physician general to the army, gave me the following instructions: "I request that when the hospitals are crowded, or when low fevers prevail, you may use the fumigations with the hyper-oxygenated muriatic acid, according to M. Morveau's process. This valuable preventative has been very improperly rejected, and has been thought useful only when contagious diseases were completely developed. I request you to inform me when this purifying remedy is put in practice?"

In consequence of this letter, I constantly recommended these fumigations in the wards of the hospitals to which I was attached. The instructions for health inserted in the last Pharmaceutical formula, for the use of military hospitals, seem to make this measure subordinate to the removal of the patients from the infected place, and successively changing their beds from room to room. Circumstances, however, may occur to prevent these measures from being adopted, and it is important to simplify the operation as much as possible. Without occasioning, therefore, any removal of the patients, the hyper-oxygenated muriatic gas may be used morning and evening without inconvenience. An attendant may carry backward and forward an earthen vessel containing some muriat of soda and manganese, and cold sulphuric acid, taking care to stir it frequently with a spatula.

Neither the attendants nor the patients have ever suffered any bad effects, in my presence, from the pungency of the fumigation. Some windows may, however, be opened, to give vent to the fumigation, but if the weather be cold this may be dispensed with; and the influence of the fumigation partly depends upon its being some time confined within a close place.

An accident happened lately in a military hospital, where perfect salubrity had previously reigned: a church, which had been converted into a fine ward, with sixty beds for chronic diseases, was infected with a fœtid smell, which exhaled from the ground, on account of a vast burying vault having been overflown by the bursting into it of a cess-pool. The sick and wounded were instantly removed; the vault was cleaned and fumigated as well as possible, and the fumigations were repeatedly made in the church itself with its doors closed. In four or five days it was necessary to fill it again with patients, and the fumigations were continued for a week; no contagion was perceived

In my opinion the instructions in the the formula above alluded to, are not sufficiently explanatory, with respect to the preservative effect of the hyperoxygenated muriatic gas, I found it had also the property of killing vermin; and it ought to be applied to the clothes of the sick soldiers, which are laid up on their coming into the hospital. Beside flies, which annoyed us much in Poland, we were also dreadfully afflicted with fleas and bugs, and on applying the above fumigations, they were all found dead.

Letter from M. Benoit Mojon, chief Physician to the Military Hospital at Genoa, on the same Subject.

Genoa, Aug. 20, 1807.

Two months ago a contagious dysentery made its appearance in the military hospital at Genoa, and almost all the patients under my care, amounting to about two hundred, were all attacked. As it is generally allowed that when dysentery is contagious, it is owing to an indiscriminate use of the same privy, I was anxious to try if fumigations of oxygenated muriatic acid had the effect of destroying the contagious exhalations which produce dysentery in healthy as well as in diseased subjects. With this view I caused the privies in the hospitals to be fumigated twice a day, and succeeded in destroying this contagion in a few days. Contagious dysentery being of frequent recurrence in the hospitals of Genoa, it is likely that I shall have frequent opportunities of witnessing the happy effects of similar precautions.

Remarks. The beneficial effects of the acid fumigations in destroying the contagion of infectious fevers are now universally known; even the yellow fever has yielded to its powerful influence, and there is reason to think that the plague itself, if not entirely eradicated by it, might, at least, be much checked by its timely use.

In the above paper we have an account of two or three new applications of the acid fumigations, well worth notice, particularly that in which it succeeded so well in stopping the progress of dysentery, a disorder so often fatal in our armies, that we think it a duty of humanity to give the fact every publicity in our power. The other new discovered benefit of the acid fumigation, though of less consequence, yet is of no small value, as contributing so much to cleanliness and comfort; the great difficulty of removing bugs where they have once become numerous, is well known, but the easy and effectual method of doing this, by the acid fumigation above mentioned, promises, when sufficiently known and practised, to completely remove this nuisance from society.

New and excellent method of Packing young Fruit and other Trees for carriage. By Mr. Wm. Curtis.

Phil. Mag. vol. 34. *p.* 156.

Mr. William Curtis, of the Botanic garden, Brompton, has lately been rewarded by the Society of Arts, &c. for his valuable application of the long white moss of the marshes (the *sphagnum palustre* of Linnæus) to the packing of young fruit and other trees for exportation. He does this by squeezing out part of the moisture from the moss, and laying courses of it about three inches thick, interposed with other courses of the trees (previously shortened in their branches and roots) stratum super stratum, until the box is filled, when the whole must be trodden down, and the lid properly secured. The trees will need no care, even during a voyage of ten or twelve months; the moss being wonderfully retentive of moisture, and seeming to possess an antiseptic property, which totally prevents fermentation and putrefaction from taking place: and in fact vegetation actually proceeds during the time the young trees remain so enslosed, shoots being formed both from their branches and roots, which however are blanched and tender for want of light and air;